

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 02279 041814Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /074 W
-----088605 042012Z /61

P R 041330Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6267
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2279

E.O.7:11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ZA
SUBJ: FIRING OF MINISTER MILNEROZ FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LUSAKA 2256

A FURTHER HIGHLY UNUSUAL TWIST TO MILNER'S FIRING HAS BEEN
PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S PUBLIC JUSTIFICATION OF HIS DECISION.
AT A SWEARING IN CEREMONY AUGUST 3 FOR MILNER'S SUCCESSOR
AND OTHERS WHO ARE TAKING ON NEW FUNCTIONS, KAUNDA ANNOUNCED
MILNER HAD BEEN DISMISSED BECAUSE THERE HAD BEEN REPORTS HE
DID NOT RESPECT THE LEADERSHIP CODE. KAUNDA SAID HE WAS MAKING
HIS REASON PUBLIC TO END SPECULATION AND TO CORRECT INTERPRETA-
TIONS BEING MADE BY THE LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS. ACCORDING
TO PRESS ACCOUNTS KAUNDA STRESSED THAT HE HOPED MILNER WOULD
BE FOUND INNOCENT. "BUT BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF HIS POST,
WHICH EMBRACED CONTROL OF THE INVESTIGATION MACHINERY, I
COULD NOT INVESTIGATE WHILE HE REMAINED IN OFFICE AS I HAVE
DONE ELSEWHERE IN THE PAST. I KNOW THAT THE STEP I HAVE
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TAKEN AGAINST COMRADE MILNER HAS SHAKEN A NUMBER OF PEOPLE
BUT I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT NO ONE WHO IS INNOCENT IS GOING
TO SUFFER IN ZAMBIA. IF AARON IS PROVED INNOCENT, THE NATION
WILL BE TOLD."

COMMENT: THE LEADERSHIP CODE IS A GUIDE TO PROPER CONDUCT
BY SENIOR GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS AND COVERS AMONG

OTHER THINGS CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FINANCIAL SPECULATION.
IT IS QUESTIONABLE THAT ANY SENIOR PARTY OR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL
ADHERES RIGIDLY TO THE CODE. BY GOING OUT OF HIS WAY TO
JUSTIFY HIS DECISION TO FIRE MILNER, KAUNDA PROBABLY WAS
MOTIVATED BY AFFECTION FOR MILNER AND A DESIRE TO DAMP DOWN
RUMORS THAT HIS DECISION WAS POLITICALLY INSPIRED. HIS
EMPHASIS ON HIS HOPE THAT MILNER WOULD BE PROVEN INNOCENT IS
MOST LIKELY SINCERE, AND LEAVES THE DOOR OPEN FOR MILNER'S
RETURN TO THE FOLD AT SOME POINT. THERE HAS BEEN NO
SPECULATION IN THE LOCAL PRESS ABOUT THE REASONS FOR MILNER'S

DISMISSAL (OTHER THAN STATEMENTS BY MILNER - REFTTEL) AND WE
HAVE SEEN NOTHING IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS AS ALLEGED BY
KAUNDA. HOWEVER, KAUNDA IS CORRECT IN SAYING THAT HIS
DECISION "HAS SHAKEN A NUMBER OF PEOPLE." THE REASON FOR
THIS IS THAT PEOPLE ARE ASKING "IF KAUNDA CAN'T TRUST MILNER,
WHO CAN HE TRUST?" THEY THEN GO ON TO SPECULATE THAT MILNER'S
DISMISSAL MUST HAVE BEEN BASED ON REPORTS OF DISLOYALTY
SINCE WHATEVER ILLEGAL DEALINGS MILNER MIGHT HAVE BEEN
INVOLVED IN MUST HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO THE PRESIDENT FOR A
LONG TIME.

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TAGS: PINT, PGOV, ZA, (MILNER, AARON)
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